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July 23, 1959

Dr. Riley Housewright
Biological Warfare Laboratories
Fort Detrick
Frederick, Maryland

Dear Riley:

I was very pleased indeed to have finally made a rapprochement between Charlie Phillips and the Space Program. I think this can just about do the job, and certainly in a way that no other group could. I haven't had a chance to discuss this with you personally but I want to thank you for what must be your own sympathetic attitude towards this cooperation.

I am writing to ask you another kind of favor. We are trying to develop methods for the fractionation of bacterial genotypes by density gradient centrifugation and I am surprised to see how little literature there has been on this question. A paper by Orr and Gordon in the March 1956 issue of the Journal of Bacteriology, refers to their contract number DA-18-064-CML-39. Also they refer to a personal communication from Dr. G. W. Monk on liquid phase sedimentation studies that must have been done in your laboratories. I am going to write to Orr and to Monk, but I thought it might save some time if I also applied to you directly for this information as some of it might have to be declassified. What we are specifically looking for is the sedimentation of bacteria in suspending fluids of various density, or in a fluid having a density gradient. There is something of a technical problem in designing a convenient solute for such experiments and it could possibly save us a tremendous amount of time to have what information you may have accumulated either in your own laboratories or in published work to which you can give me references. I should be quite grateful to you for this favor.

Housewright

Do come see us the next time you are on the West Coast.

Yours sincerely,

Joshua Lederberg
Professor of Genetics